

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 USIE-00 EURE-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 IO-14 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 /106 W

----- 026235

O R 141421Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0447

AMCONSUL MUNICH IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 02468

MUNICH FOR AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, UR

SUBJECT: RADIO LIBERTY AND SOLZHENITSYN

REF: MUNICH 244

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE FOR RADIO LIBERTY TO MOVE CAUTIOUSLY ON QUESTION OF BROADCASTS BY SOLZHENITSYN TO THE USSR, PARTLY IN SOLZHENITSYN'S PERSONAL INTEREST, BUT PRIMARILY IN THE INTEREST OF AVOIDING ADDITIONAL FRICTIONS IN FRG-USSR RELATIONS. IF THEY OCCURRED AS A RESULT OF SUCH BROADCASTS, THIS COULD CREATE DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN THE U.S. AND FRG AND MIGHT ALSO WORSEN THE CLIMATE FOR BOTH RADIO LIBERTY AND RADIO FREE EUROPE'S CONTINUED OPERATIONS HERE.

2. WITH REGARD TO THE PERSONAL ASPECT, SOLZHENITSYN HIM-
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SELF IS NO DOUBT THE BEST JUDGE OF HOW BROADCASTS TO THE

USSR MIGHT AFFECT HIS FAMILY'S PROSPECTS FOR JOINING HIM. HOWEVER, HE IS IN A LESS GOOD POSITION TO CALCULATE THE IMPACT THAT RAPID AND HIGHLY VISIBLE EXPLOITATION OF HIS PRESENCE HERE COULD HAVE ON BONN'S RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW.

3. A FONOFF SOVIET DESK REP WITH WHOM WE DISCUSSED THIS QUESTION SEEMED FAIRLY RELAXED. FOR ONE THING, HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT SOLZHENITSYN WOULD ADOPT A VERY LOW PROFILE, AT LEAST UNTIL HIS FAMILY CAME OUT AND PROBABLY FOR SOME TIME THEREAFTER. HE NOTED THAT BOTH RADIO LIBERTY AND DEUTSCHE WELLE WERE BROADCASTING THE "GULAG ARCHIPELAGO" TO THE USSR AND HE WAS INCLINED TO DOUBT THAT ANYTHING SOLZHENITSYN MIGHT SAY IN A DIRECT BROADCAST WOULD BE MORE OFFENSIVE TO SOVIET AUTHORITIES THAN WHAT WAS IN THE BOOK. ANYWAY, HE SAID, ONE COULD ALWAYS COUNTER SOVIET COMPLAINTS ABOUT SOLZHENITSYN'S ACTIVITIES HERE BY POINTING OUT THAT IT WAS THEIR IDEA TO EXPEL HIM.

4. THIS OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF THE SITUATION MAY WELL PROVE TO BE CORRECT, BUT THERE WOULD BE PROBLEMS IF IT IS NOT, AND THAT IS OUR REASON FOR URGING CAUTION. WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT A VIGOROUS NEGATIVE REACTION BY THE SOVIETS WOULD CAUSE CONSIDERABLE DISMAY AT THE TOP LEVELS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. FRG-USSR RELATIONS ARE ALREADY SOMEWHAT STRAINED, PARTICULARLY AS A RESULT OF THE VARIOUS DIFFICULTIES OVER BERLIN, AND THE FRG WANTS TO IMPROVE THEM, NOT ONLY IN ORDER TO ENSURE FULL APPLICATION OF THE BERLIN AGREEMENT, BUT MORE BROADLY, TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR A VISIT TO THE USSR BY CHANCELLOR BRANDT LATER THIS YEAR. RADIO LIBERTY HAS SO FAR CREATED FEW IF ANY PROBLEMS FOR THE BRANDT GOVERNMENT'S EASTERN POLICY, NEVER HAVING GENERATED THE KIND OF DIPLOMATIC REPROACHES FROM THE USSR THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, RADIO FREE EUROPE BROADCASTS HAVE ELICITED FROM POLAND. IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF THIS SITUATION WERE TO CHANGE NOW, AT WHAT THE FRG LEADERSHIP OBVIOUSLY REGARDS AS A CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN ITS DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ANTISOVIET, PROPAGANDA, AMITY, RADIO BROADCASTING, WRITERS, BOOKS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BONN02468
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740233/aaaabfbs.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: MUNICH 244
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 APR 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <31 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RADIO LIBERTY AND SOLZHENITSYN
TAGS: PFOR, GE, UR, RADIO LIBERTY, (SOLZHENITSYN, ALEKSANDR I)
To: STATE MUNICH
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005